

WHAT IS HAPPENING IN THE WORLD OF ART



"ANTHEA," BY CHARLES SIMS.
In the recent English exhibition, Knoedler Galleries.

PEOPLE are saying that it is unfair to compare the English pictures on recent exhibition in the Knoedler Galleries with our National Academy, and I suppose they are right. Although some of the English painters exhibit from time to time in the Royal Academy, most of them, and the best of them, flourish outside its pale.

To match up a proper team of Americans against them we should be compelled to seek among the members of our independent artists; and casting about the other day in my mind's eye for candidates for the rival All American group I confess I felt a trifle dismayed. To assemble a collection of our recent work that would eclipse the English show would be difficult.

This too in spite of the fact that the Knoedler exhibition was a casual one, probably secured in a hurry, as a background or pendant for the "Western Wedding" by Orpen. If the English were to feel we were out with a serious, menacing challenge they could easily come back at us with a still more formidable group.

They could not beat the Orpen, of course, for that is surely the most interesting Orpen that has been sent to these shores; but they could no doubt induce Gerald Blackwell for patriotic reasons to lend to us some of his superb Wilson Steers, and as for Augustus John, his newest great decorative canvas, "Gypsies in South France," is already in New York decorating the walls of "The Coffee House Club" and could also doubtless be borrowed from the owner, John Quinn. Besides these there are others among the contemporary Englishmen who could improve upon their recent representation, such as Henry Tonks and Rothenstein. There are also other strong men who were not represented at all.

This is not to be misconstrued into a dazzled, overestimation of these English. They do not appear to be passing through a great art period in England. There is not the exaltation to be noticed that was aroused years ago by the Pre-Raphaelite movement. Nevertheless the instructed amateur views such an exhibition as that at Knoedler's with pleasure.

Comparing it with our American work it may be said to be distinguished with a freer use of ideas and with a greater individualism of style. The English of course do not have the advantage of living in a colorful atmosphere, as we do, and a room full of English pictures is not apt to scintillate as would ours or the French. Within their limited use of color, however, there is even so a greater variety. In other words the average English painter of the day may be said to have more courage to be himself than the average American has.

In addition, the Englishman is more thorough. Merely from the point of view of workmanship it is evident even in this small collection at Knoedler's that he is

art critics is their extreme simplicity. Once success has been achieved it always seems so easy. I dare say each of my readers is already thinking that could he have met Maurice Sterne early in life or Mr. Vanderlip late in life he too by this would be having an exhibition in the Berlin Photographic Company's gallery. But there, dear reader, I fear you are wrong; that is, if you are discouraged, for there is no cause for discouragement. Every new artist that gets his chance and is acclaimed by Mr. Birnbaum should give you renewed hope. The searchlights swinging the arc of the heavens will surely spot you out some of these days, and the fewer there are of you in obscurity the more certain is your chance.

Mr. Karfunkle had no intention of becoming a sculptor, and every figure he

canon against this fusion, and Taine has taught precisely the same principles and has shown that all decadence, all perversion of taste, is due to the disregard of the fundamental principles that differentiate the arts."

Goethe, of course, if he lived to-day would be modifying his canons and would be under no illusions as to the "Platonic relations of art and science." Goethe was a strictly up to date person in his time and excessively liberal. He did not condemn schools just because he happened not to belong to them. In his account of the soirees in the house of his friend Winkler ("Dichtung und Wahrheit") he says:

"Often as I was permitted to be present when they examined works of art I do not remember that a dispute ever arose; the school from which the artist had pro-

ceeded, the time in which he lived, the peculiar talent that nature had bestowed on him and the degree of excellence to which he had brought it in his performances were always fairly considered. There was no prejudice for spiritual or terrestrial subjects, for landscape or for city views, for animate or inanimate; the question was always about the accordance with art. Now although from their situation, mode of thought, abilities and opportunities these amateurs and collectors inclined more to the Dutch school, yet while the eye was practised on the endless merits of the northwestern artist a look of reverential longing was always turned toward the southeast."

In short Goethe would not have said that painting "can have but Platonic relations with its sister arts or sciences." He might have said "should not have," but he would not have used the word "cannot." Perhaps Mr. Karfunkle may be induced to take back his cruel dictum. Why, it even casts a doubt upon the legitimacy of impressionism. Think of that! Certainly art and science united to produce impressionism. Theodore Duret can even tell the name of the scientist. But I think these young artists who come back from Paris say these things just to get us conservative thinkers excited!

Before laying aside Mr. Karfunkle's and Mr. Birnbaum's interesting remarks there is one other phrase that calls for a word of comment. Mr. Karfunkle, it seems, "was rarely met with at the cafes of the Quarter, where genius sipped its anisette and jealously tore established reputations to tatters." Mr. Karfunkle was quite right, of course, not to go to cafes. It is a great waste of time and money to sip anisette. And I fear he was right also in surmising that the young people who sip it tear established reputations to tatters immediately afterward. Anisette has that effect. But the question is, is it essentially wrong to tear established reputations to tatters or is it in reality a public service?

If the ruffian that sits in cafes sipping anisette succeeds in tearing an established reputation to tatters, does it not prove that that established reputation must have been constructed of flimsy material? Fancy any one paying any attention to what the ruffian said about Michelangelo! So if the reputations are not really and genuinely established for all eternity, is it not really a good thing that they be torn to tatters instantly, for the dear public's sake? Honestly, is it not better so?



MISS LUCILLE PATERSON, BY MME. LUCAS ROBQUET.

On exhibition, Maison Ad Braun et Cie.

made in the Bourdelle atelier "was systematically destroyed despite the teacher's protests." Karfunkle wished to master form, and only form. He paid no heed to the modern theories of the modern Frenchmen. "The subjectivity of all objectivity," said Mr. Karfunkle, "to a purely abstract sense of form, using art as a basis for metaphysical or mathematical speculation, seemed to me to violate the essential law that circumscribes all art expression. The art of painting can have but Platonic relations with its sister arts or with the sciences. Goethe long ago laid down a



"ON THE ROCKS," BY DAIRA KARFUNKLE.

On view at Berlin Photographic Co. spirit of the German romanticists Bocklin, Schwind and Stuck. Then he began to wander about Europe, visiting the galleries and earning a livelihood the while by making magazine illustrations, stained glass and anatomical drawings. In 1908, eight years after his return to New York, he had the good fortune to meet Frank A. Vanderlip, who took a warm personal interest in the young artist and enabled him to return to Paris to continue his studies under that rare and sympathetic master the distinguished sculptor Bourdelle."

Those are the facts to date. The aggravating thing about them to the young artists who have had as yet no sort of success whatever and who are desperately contemplating giving up art and becoming



"SHEPHERD AND SHEEP," BY MAUVE.
Important example recently sold by John Levy.

MISS GLADYS WILES, BY IRVING R. WILES.
On exhibition, Knoedler Galleries

Ananda Coomaraswamy's essay upon Buddhist Primitives in the March *Burlington* emphasizes a point of special interest in regard to Far Eastern art. He is discussing the marble colossi of Anuradhapura, which he considers to be as purely monumental as the pyramids of Egypt, and also as true primitives 'since their massive forms and austere outlines are immediately determined by the moral grandeur of the thesis and the suppressed emotion of its realization, without any intrusion of individuality or parade of skill.'

The indefatigable Joseph Pennell is exhibiting his recent work in the Roullier Galleries, Chicago, and among them are twenty-five drawings and lithographs made in London in wartime.

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